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 TO: Department of State 767.00/1-3152
 FROM: AMEMBASSY, PARIS No. 2008 January 31, 1952
 REF: Peripheral: Balkans 1952 FEB 12 2 51
 SUBJECT: Conversation with French Foreign Office Official Concerning
 Information from Balkan Countries

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There is transmitted herewith a memorandum of conversation prepared by Mr. Horace J. Nickels of the Embassy's Peripheral Reporting Unit summarizing an interview which he had with M. de Villelume of the Eastern European Section of Political Affairs in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The purpose of the interview was to explore possibilities of obtaining from official French channels information on Balkan developments, particularly in the countries of Albania and Bulgaria.

David Bruce

PWB

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From Paris

Memorandum of Conversation

Subject: Interview With French Foreign Office Official Concerning
Information From Balkan Countries.

Participants: M. de Villelume, Eastern European Section, Political Affairs,
French Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Horace J. Nickels, Attaché
of Embassy.

By appointment at my request on January 30, 1952, I called upon M. de Villelume to inquire into the possibilities of obtaining information available to the Quai d'Orsay concerning Balkan developments particularly in the countries of Albania and Bulgaria. Mr. Raymond Laporte, who was until recently principal officer of the Section on Eastern European Affairs in the French Foreign Office, has departed for a diplomatic assignment in Athens and M. de Villelume has assumed his responsibilities.

I told M. de Villelume that in view of the fact that the United States presently has no diplomatic missions in Albania and Bulgaria my inquiry concerned especially those two countries. I wondered whether I might arrange to see him periodically with a view to discussing developments in the Balkans and, if possible, to obtain for transmission to the Department such information as the Quai d'Orsay might be disposed to impart with particular regard to Albania and Bulgaria.

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In M. de Villalume's opinion, American channels of information on Albania are undoubtedly far better supplied than the French Legation at Tirana. He observed that there is a sizeable colony of Italian nationals in Albania which might constitute a superior source of information.

M. de Villelume stated that the French Minister to Albania is expected in Paris within the next few months and he offered, if I should be interested, to introduce me to him. It was his feeling, however, that

the French Embassy in Washington, [] would afford the most feasible means of transmitting data on Albania which the Ministry might be in position to make available.

M. de Villelume said he would be glad to see me from time to time when I had questions that he might be able to answer. He volunteered also to get in touch with me if Balkan developments of special interest should come to his attention.

Horace J. Nickels,
Attaché of Embassy.

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